

## Contact Isolation

### What is it?

Contact isolation is a name for safety procedures that prevent specific germs from spreading in the hospital. Some germs spread directly by skin-to-skin contact or indirectly when someone touches contaminated clothes, linens, medical equipment, and things in a patient's surroundings. We can stop the spread of germs by following these safety procedures.

### Why am I on contact isolation?

You have:

- ☐ MRSA (Antibiotic-Resistant *Staphylococcus aureus*)
- ☐ *C. difficile*
- ☐ VRE (Antibiotic-Resistant *Enterococcus*)
- ☐ Other \_\_\_\_\_

### What do I need to know?

#### You

- ▶ Read: *Patient Information: Hand Hygiene*
- ▶ When you are an inpatient, you will have a private room.
- ▶ Always tell your nurse before leaving your room.
- ▶ You can leave your room for tests, procedures, and organized activities. Tell staff right away that you are on contact isolation.
- ▶ You do not usually need to wear gloves or a gown outside your room, but *do* put on clean clothes. Always wash your hands before you leave your room.
- ▶ You can walk in the unit hallway, but avoid touching anything.
- ▶ When you need linens, a snack, or a drink, ask your nurse. Do not get these items yourself.

- ▶ Before using the common laundry, ask your nurse.
- ▶ Before using the microwave, ask your nurse to help you. Do not use the microwave yourself.
- ▶ When at organized activities, stay 2 feet from other people and do not share items with them.
- ▶ Do not go to the library, cafeterias, gift shops or other crowded hospital areas unless someone goes with you. Have that person pick up your food and other items.

#### Visitors

- ▶ Wash your hands or use alcohol hand gel when you arrive, after touching the patient, and when you leave the patient's room.
- ▶ You do not need to wear gloves and a gown if you just sit in the patient's room.
- ▶ You do need to wear gloves and a gown when helping care for the patient. Do not wear gloves and a gown outside the patient's room. Do not touch your face or food with your gloves on.
- ▶ If you visit other patients and their families, do it in common areas. Do not enter another patient's room.

### What will my healthcare staff do?

Staff will wear gloves, and sometimes a gown, when they are in your room and caring for you.

### How long will I be on isolation?

You will be on isolation until lab tests show that the germ is gone or until your symptoms improve.

### Questions?

Feel free to talk to your nurse, doctor, or call the Hospital Epidemiology Service at 301-496-2209.

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8/08

